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Article Title: Afanasii Nikitin's *Weltanschauung*

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Afanasii Nikitin's political and religious views have been discussed on many occasions, especially by writers who noted the coincidence of some of the opinions he expressed with those held by representatives of the early reformation movements in Russia¹

There is little agreement about the reasons for his journey to India and the circumstances in which his *Khozhenie za tri moria* was written are shrouded in mystery. Several studies of the *Khozhenie za tri moria* share the view that Nikitin travelled to India on a mission of state. The Tver merchant was seen as undertaking, in the words of M. N. Tikhomirov, 'a sort of mercantile reconnaissance of the road to the Land of Miracles, which, for reasons of internal policy, had been closed in the mid-XVth century'² A similar explanation had been proffered by I. I. Sreznevskii, who wrote the first study of the *Khozhenie*, noting that it was found as part of the Sofiiskii II and L'vov chronicle compilations. According to some writers, chronicles are 'official documents' Nikitin died on his return journey through Lithuanian territory, and his *tetrad*i were, according to the chronicles, delivered to Moscow to the *d'iak* Vasilii Mamyrev, frequently considered to be an employee of the *posol'skii prikaz* or foreign chancellery³

Sreznevskii, whose views influenced many of his successors, wrote:

Did Nikitin keep a record throughout his journey? Where did he begin and finish his notes? Such questions are difficult to answer, but it is clear that he wrote the notes in India, and, judging by the number of variant manuscripts, he not only wrote, but re-wrote and amended them...⁴

The view that the *Khozhenie* was written after Afanasii's return from India, on the road to Smolensk⁵ is supported by many authors, among them N. S. Trubetskoi, whose article was published in the 1920's, but became known in the USSR only recently. Trubetskoi's main preoccupation was the aesthetic value of the *Khozhenie za tri moria* since his aim was to discuss this example of Old Russian literature 'using the same scientific methods as those which are considered suitable for modern literature'⁶ Trubetskoi turned his attention to the composition of the work: 'an alternation between rather long segments of calm exposition and shorter segments of religious-lyrical digression'. The author considered that the 'segments of calm exposition' showed a

certain symmetry: the "staticity" of their description increased between the beginning and the middle of the narrative, only to be lost again by the end. The "segments of calm exposition" then acquired, as in the beginning, a more "dynamic character" so that "the whole of the *Khozhenie* is framed by two prayers"⁷

Comparing Nikitin's notes with accounts of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, Trubetskoi concluded that Nikitin consciously chose to make his narrative distinctive, using lists of foreign place names and "an accumulation of exotic words with original combinations of sounds" as a means of giving his work an exotic effect, a "special *couleur locale*". At the same time such an accumulation was "symbolic": while in India Nikitin prayed and discussed his faith "in Russian, i.e. in a language incomprehensible to those around him"; after his return to Rus "the change in his environment turned the linguistic expressions of his spiritual state inside out" so that Nikitin used eastern languages to "record the ideas which in India only came into his head in Russian"⁸

This is not the place for a detailed discussion of Trubetskoi's analysis, but it should be noted that the author gives no proof of the symmetrical location of the "segments of calm exposition". The division of the text into segments of "calm exposition" and religious-lyrical digression" is highly subjective: a number of the fragments identified by Trubetskoi as "religious-lyrical" contain descriptions which are both "static" and "dynamic"; several sections of the work are left out of the analysis altogether⁹ Indeed the whole hypothesis about Afanasii Nikitin's conscious creation of such a composition is unconvincing. Trubetskoi does not consider the question whether the time which remained between Nikitin's arrival in Lithuanian Rus (he never reached Muscovy) and his death was sufficient to relocate the different parts of his composition in such a refined manner, or to undergo the linguistic metamorphosis postulated.

Trubetskoi considered Nikitin's *Weltanschauung* only in passing, while developing the idea that "the change in his environment turned the linguistic expressions of his spiritual state inside out" upon his return to Rus.

"...Seeing the power and military might of the Muslim rulers, victorious in the struggle against the 'infidels', it occurred to Afanasii Nikitin that while, from outward appearances alone, Islam seemed to be aiding its adherents, God nevertheless knew which faith was true and which was false. Once again it was only a thought, not spoken aloud or in Russian; for when he wrote his memoirs Afanasii Nikitin expressed this idea in Persian"¹⁰

A more recent study of the *Khozhenie za tri moria* by G. Lenhoff addresses itself specifically to the question of Nikitin's view of the world and his religious beliefs. Her conclusions are clear from the heading of her article: *Beyond Three Seas: Afanasij Nikitin's journey from Orthodoxy to Apostasy*.

Lenhoff also considers that Nikitin's journey was part of a special mission, and that "he was not primarily a patriot or a defender of the faith, but a merchant in search of new markets" with "some idea of what to expect beyond the Caspian", and wanting "to tap the legendary markets of India". Nikitin's adherence to his faith was incompatible with "his interests as a merchant and his progress as traveller"¹¹ which demanded conversion to Islam.

As evidence for his apostasy, and sole proof of his conversion, the author cites the part Christian-part Muslim and "creolised Arab" prayers of the *Khozhenie* and Nikitin's reference to the might of *Mamet deni* (Muslim faith). Nikitin's account, Lenhoff states, "opens with a standard Orthodox prayer" but the concluding Muslim prayer "leaves no doubt as to the state of his faith"¹² Yet Nikitin states that he went to India *ot knogiiia bedy* having been robbed on the way to the Caucasus. After years of travel he wrote "I have passed four Easters in Muslim lands, but I have not departed from Christianity..." and reported that he told the Hindus he met that he was not a *besermenin* but a Christian¹³. Lenhoff's hypothesis that Nikitin was converted to Islam is, moreover, contradicted by his behaviour and his fate. Conversion to Islam was accompanied by ritual circumcision. If Nikitin had been circumcised in India it would have been suicidal to return to Rus, and it should be noted that he did not try to remain in Tatar Crimea, instead he went on to Smolensk. Muscovite law punished apostasy severely, even by death¹⁴. And without such a decisive step as circumcision what weight would have been given by Muslims to his conversion to the "true faith"?

In stating that Nikitin was seeking the "legendary markets of India" Lenhoff ignores his own direct evidence that he went to India after being robbed, not having the means to return to Rus. She explains his statement to the Hindus about his faith by his need to trade with the Indians, which meant he "shed his Muslim identity" while talking to them¹⁵. Nikitin's protestations that he did not abandon Christianity are dismissed as patently untrue: "he is attempting to explain away his apostasy, but his excuses will not tolerate scrutiny", he gets tangled in his own "equivocations"¹⁶.

Lenhoff poses the question of Nikitin's intended audience at the beginning of her article¹⁷, but does not answer it. The history of the text remains

outside the scope of her article. Yet if Nikitin had written with the intention of misleading the reader, it is all the more important to establish the time and circumstances in which he wrote, and the audience for which he wrote.

The *Khozhenie za tri moria* survives in three versions:

1) Chronicle version (Ms of L'vov chronicle, GPB F.IV.144; Mss. of Sofiiskaia II chronicle, TsGADA, f.181 No. 371/821 and GIM, Voskresenskoe sobr. No. 154b. All are of the XVth century);

2) Trinity (Ermolinskii) version. (GBL f.304, III, No. 4, late XVth-mid XVth c. compilation. Close to this version is the text of GBL f.178, No. 3271, a late XVth c. compilation which includes fragments of the *Khozhenie*);

3) Sukhanovskii version (GPB F. XVII.17 and GBL f.310, No.751, both XVII c. chronographic type compilations)¹⁸

The Sukhanovskii version is clearly based on the Trinity version. Written in the XVIIth c. it consistently edits out sections which are of dubious Orthodoxy from the older version¹⁹ The Chronicle and Trinity (Ermolinskii) versions are close to the original versions of the work, but neither can be seen as being based on the other: they evidently derive from a common protograph which was either Nikitin's autograph or an early copy. The two versions differ mainly because the Chronicle version omits two sections of the text and because the Trinity version has been edited to give it a more literary style, removing some of the Tver *realia* of the original. In this respect the text of the Chronicle version is nearer to the protograph²⁰

The character of the chronicle containing the Chronicle version of the *Khozhenie* has been fairly clearly established. The *Khozhenie* is part of the 1518 chronicle compilation, which is included in the Sofiiskii III and L'vov chronicles, but it must have been incorporated in the chronicle account before 1518. "The same year I acquired the writings of Afanasii Nikitin, merchant..." reads the entry under 1475. The compiler of the previous chronicle compilation, completed in the 1480's and incorporated in the 1518 compilation, is the most likely author of these words.

The 1480's compilation was, however, anything but an official chronicle, since it champions enemies of Ivan III, and contains a number of stories which would not have had the approval of the grand prince or his court²¹ While there is no doubt that the *Khozhenie za tri moria* is not directed against the grand prince, neither is it an account included in an "official" compilation on the orders of the grand prince. The Trinity version of the chronicle, dated to the late XVth century, is equally unofficial. In this version the *Khozhenie*

za tri moria accompanies the Ermolinskii chronicle, though not as part of it. The latter was compiled in the early 1480's using the Kirillo-Beloozerskii 1472 and was itself a far from official chronicle²²

Vasilii Mamyrev, who gave Nikitin's work to the compiler of the 1480's was not a *posol'skii d'iak* at any time, and had no responsibility for foreign affairs. He was responsible for home affairs alone, such as the administration of Moscow during Ivan III's Ugra campaign or the construction of fortifications in Vladimir. Those who consider that he was involved in ambassadorial affairs mix him up with his brother Daniil Mamyrev²³. In any case it is impossible to draw any broad conclusions from the fact that Vasilii Mamyrev gave Nikitin's *tetradi* to one of the chronicle compilers.

There are no grounds for the supposition that the *Khozhenie za tri moria* was written or edited after Afanasii Nikitin completed his journey²⁴. The *Khozhenie* ends with the description of Kaffa (Theodosia). Ahead of Nikitin lay the difficult journey through the Ukrainian lands of the grand principality of Lithuania, during which he must have fallen ill, for he died before reaching Smolensk. Was he in a position to write during this journey? It seems that he only had the time to add the heading: "Here have I recorded my sinful journey beyond three seas..." for the heading mentions three seas and names the Black (Stambul) Sea as the last. The words "For the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me your sinful slave, Afanasii, son of Mikita", considered by both N.S. Trubetskoi and G. Lenhoff as the beginning and the starting point of the narration are only found in the Trinity version. If they were part of the protograph, they were added with the closing prayer. No other traces of the author's editing can be discerned²⁵

It is also hard to support the view that Nikitin set out on a planned expedition for the "discovery of new markets". V.P. Adrianova-Perets has produced the most plausible explanation of Nikitin's journey. She considered that his original aim was to reach Shirvan in North Caucasus.

"Nikitin's own words suggest that he was not thinking of distant India when setting out on his journey. Remembering how he was robbed near Astrakhan, he writes in the *Khozhenie*: 'And I because of the many disasters went to India, because I had nothing to go to Rus with...'" She also disagreed with the view that the *Khozhenie* was written after the traveller safely reached Rus:

"not only is it difficult, if not impossible to remember the wealth of

factual detail (for example the exact distance between towns in days and in *kous*) which distinguishes the *Khozhenie* the circumstances of his difficult journey home were totally unsuitable for literary endeavours... The text of the *Khozhenie* contains clear indications that at times Nikitin recorded his impressions on the spot. Thus he pauses before his description of Meliktuchar's march to wonder what route he should take home, and he obviously writes his disturbing thoughts down immediately, before his journey, which is why he speaks of them in the present tense: 'O Lord, my God, I beseech you, save me, oh Lord! I do not know the way...' These words leave no doubt that they were written before Nikitin had chosen the final route of his journey... There is, therefore, no reason to suppose that Nikitin only began compiling his travel notes on his way home"²⁶

Adrianova-Perets' argument seems convincing. Nikitin and his fellow travellers were robbed on their way to Shirvan, first near Astrakhan by Nogai Tatars and again on the shores of the Caspian by the Kaitaks. The merchants, wanting to return to Rus, appealed to the Shirvan Shah for help, but were refused. 'And we, lamenting, went our separate ways: those who had something in Rus, they went to Rus, and those who owed money went where their eyes took them...' (13). Not surprisingly, since trade was linked to credit, and a *gost'* setting out on a long and difficult journey seldom possessed the enormous sums needed for trading abroad. The merchants therefore took not only their own, but also other people's goods and money, in the expectation of realising a profit. Describing the situation of the merchants in caravan Nikitin clearly divided them into two groups: those who 'had something in Rus' and were therefore not in debt, and those 'who owed money' Nikitin obviously belonged to the latter group and therefore had to go 'where his eyes took him'. If he returned to Russia he faced debts or worse *pravezh*, a humiliating procedure of public investigation under duress, and the threat of becoming indentured to a creditor until loans were paid off²⁷

This was not an attractive prospect. So, 'lamenting', Nikitin went in search of gain, hoping to return to Russia with at least enough to pay off his debts. Nikitin lists the alternatives facing the members of his caravan: they could stay in Shemakha, the capital of the 'land of Shirvan'. or to go on to Baku, also in the domain of the Shirvan Shah. Afanasii's eyes took him a lot further, through Derbent and Baku, across the sea to Persia and from there to India.

The text of the *Khozhenie* leaves no doubt that we are dealing with genuine

travel notes compiled by the Tver merchant during his journey to India. These notes are a sort of diary, even though they are not divided into days, but consist of several temporal layers. The description of the first part of the voyage (the road to Derbent, encounters with robbers, Caspian crossing) was evidently written after Nikitin had covered a considerable way, either in Hormuz or in India. The account of his journey home was probably written in Kaffa. The rest of the text was written at different times, one large section before he started his journey to Hindustan²⁸, while the section beginning "And on the fifth Easter I decided to go to Rus" was written after. As has been noted, there is no reason to suppose that the *Khozhenie* contains any interpolations apart from the heading. The text suggests that most of it was written in Hindustan, and only the final part could have been written after the crossing of the "Iast" or Black Sea.

It is this which makes Trubetskoi's picture of a work consisting of a logical and symmetrical arrangement of segments highly unconvincing. Nor can we accept the notion that it contains deliberate "excuses" and "equivocations".

Nikitin's notes, which were kept as a sort of diary, were not intended for a specific audience. Like many diarists, of course, he thought that his work would be read one day. His *bratia russkie khristiane* (15, 37) might read it sometime in the future, perhaps even after his death, yet he was aware that his Russian readers might be suspicious and disapproving. It is this which prompted him to record some of his text in Turkic and Persian dialect, for example for his open and not quite proper remarks about the free behaviour of "black women". But he uses the same encoding for other topics which are of far more interest to us here. In using foreign language for his comments on political and religious issues, which betray views which were far from orthodox, Nikitin was motivated by the same considerations as his contemporary Efrosin, compiler of the *keleinye sborniki* of the Kirillo-Beloozersk monastery. Efrosin warned readers of some of the works he copied: "Do not read this in the company of others, nor show it to many people"²⁹. This too was behind Nikitin's practice of coding ideas which he considered sacred³⁰.

The links between Nikitin's ideas and ideas of the early Reformation have been frequently mentioned. It should be said, however, that in this context we can only speak of isolated ideas, rather a system of thought in opposition to Orthodoxy. Nikitin could not have thought himself either a heretic or a Protestant. On the contrary, he did his best to observe Orthodox feast days especially Easter during his travels, and he repeatedly commented in despair

on the fact that he lost accurate information about dates on which the feasts should be celebrated. "I do not know the date of the great day (*Velik den*) of Christ's resurrection, and I have to guess at it from clues: the great Christian day comes nine or ten days before the Muslim *bairam*. For I have nothing with me, not a single book, though we brought books with us from Rus; but when they robbed me, they took them, and I have forgotten all the Christian feast days of the Christian faith, knowing neither Easter, nor Christmas..." (20,41).

A. I. Klivanov, who considered that Nikitin was a declared anti-trinitarian heretic, doubted the genuineness of these words. "Afanasii Nikitin's repeated lamentations regarding his inability to celebrate the feasts of the Church have an ironic ring to them"³¹, he wrote. Gail Lenhoff also distrusts Nikitin's testimony. She sees his mention of Christian and Muslim holy days as ambiguous. In her view Nikitin was 1) not keeping the Orthodox feasts, 2) fasting and feasting with the Muslims and 3) trying to conceal it from the Russian reader and trying to rationalise it to himself³²

It seems to us that Nikitin's account of his attempts to keep the feasts is neither ironic nor ambiguous. The Russian calendar was a solar calendar, but the dates of moveable feasts were determined from complex calculations based on both lunar and solar calendars. The date of Easter was determined from special tables, the *Paschalia*. The Muslims used a lunar calendar, and Nikitin had evidently been robbed of his Paschal tables and his calendar. Without them he could, perhaps, have managed at first, especially in the Caucasus and Persia, where he would have met co-religionists. By keeping track of days and weeks (the old Russian calendar gave each week a number and a name) he could work out the days of Christmas and Easter. But it would have been hard to commit such a system to unaided memory. It is not surprising that in India, where even the system of seasons is different, Nikitin lost count and had to resort to guesswork. There is therefore no reason to doubt his words that he had to guess the dates of christian feasts (22-23, 27, 43-44, 48), but kept them in spite of being uncertain of getting the days right.

Though he remained true to the Christian faith, Nikitin did use Muslim prayers, indeed one of them concludes his narrative. But that prayer also appeals to Christ: *Isa rukh oalo, aalik solom*, Jesus Spirit of God, peace to thee (30,50). These words have been taken to be Nikitin's addition to the Muslim text. N.S. Trubetskoi wrote that "Nikitin called upon Christ and the Holy Spirit in the same breath as he called upon Allah"³³ and Klivanov interpreted

the prayer as "indirect, badly disguised" attack on the dogma of the Trinity, for Jesus was here "not the Son of God, but the Spirit of God"³⁴. The mention of Jesus is not Nikitin's addition, but a quotation, since the Koran recognises Christ as a prophet the "word" and "spirit" of God³⁵. Yet one question remains: why did Nikitin cite a Muslim prayer?

To understand the development of Nikitin's thinking, it is necessary to bear in mind that in India Nikitin, as a *garip* or foreigner, found himself in the position of a second-class citizen. He became a metic, to use an analogous Greek term. Though Russians knew only too well what it meant to live under a foreign yoke, the Russian principalities were not part of the Mongol Horde, and in their own land Russians were always the dominant majority. This must have made life very difficult for him, especially as he did not know when he would have the chance to return home: "Oh, woe is me, miserable sinner...I do not know the way I will follow out of Hindustan" (23, 25, 44, 45). Every now and then this threw him into misery and despair: "And all the people are black, and all are thieves, and all the women are whores and witches, there are robbers and lies and poison everywhere, for they kill their own lords with poison herbs..." (16, 37). These words are not a description of *indeiane*³⁶, with whom Nikitin was to establish good relations, but an expression of the misery of living in an alien world.

Nikitin was trapped in Hindustan, and he did not just want to lament his fate. It was inevitable that he should start looking at the world around him with different eyes, the eyes of an outsider. In such circumstances he discovered a common language with the "Kaffirs" or "infidels", as the Muslims termed the Hindu population. "And I told them my religion, that I am not a Muslim, but a Christian professing faith in Christ, and that my name is Ofonasei, and my Muslim name is Khozia Isuf Khorosani. And they became open with me about everything, and revealed to me their diet, their trade, their worship and everything else, and allowed their women to stay uncovered in my presence." (17-18).

Since he found himself in a land ruled by *besermene*, Nikitin was compelled to adopt metic ways. He called himself a name which sounded Muslim, Khozia (Hodzha, meaning master) Isuf of Korosan and thereby also implied that he came from a distant Muslim town. These adaptations affected not only the way he behaved, but also the way he thought. Surrounded, as he was, by a foreign culture he, naturally enough, responded to it. The Bahmani sultan was powerful and highly successful in war, at least at the time when Nikitin

was in India. It is natural for people to consider the circumstances of their life inevitable and a medieval man in such circumstances would have thought them the will of God. What explained the success of the Muslim ruler? Could it not have been, at least in part, the "true faith"?

Nikitin found the answer to this conundrum not just out of practical necessity, since his solution has a profound philosophical meaning. It is not incidental that it is recorded in the conclusion of the *Khozhenie*, written after Nikitin had decided to depart for Rus³⁷, for the issue continued to trouble him.

The "wanderer's tale", which originated in the Mediterranean and was employed by Boccaccio in the *Decameron*, was popular throughout the Middle Ages. It tells of the Sultan Saladdin, the great Arab military leader who conquered Jerusalem back from the Crusaders. Saladdin asked one of his subjects, the Jew Melchisedek, which faith was the true faith: the Judaic, Muslim or Christian? Melchisedek was a wise man and he understood that Saladdin was trying to trap him: should he not renounce his own faith he would be accused of denigrating Islam. He answered with the tale of the good father who, wishing to be fair to his three beloved sons, left them not one ring, which would give seniority to one of them, but three identical rings: "Let me be permitted, my lord, to say the same of the three laws which God the Father passed on to the three nations. Each nation considers itself the heir, possessor and executor of the true law which reveals the path of righteousness, but which of the three is right remains, as with the three rings, an open question"³⁸ Nikitin would not have read Boccaccio, but such ideas were constantly present in the Muslim world, especially the world of metics among whom Nikitin found himself.

Nikitin's ideas about "the true faith" are most clearly expressed in his comment on the military successes of the Muslim sultan under whose rule he found himself. Having described the great army of the sultan going into battle against the *indeiane*, Nikitin wrote: "Such is the might of the Muslim sultan of India *Mamet deni iariia* (the faith of Mahommet suits them)"

But having written this Nikitin evidently had second thoughts and explained, first in transliterated Persian, then in Russian: "*A rast deni khudo donot*

but God knows which is the true faith. And the true faith means to know one God, and to speak his name in purity in all pure places" (27, 48)³⁹ What is the true meaning of these words? Trubetskoi's interpretation was: "while, from outward appearances alone, Islam seemed to be aiding its adherents, God nevertheless knew which faith was true and which was false"⁴⁰ All the

qualifications ('from outward appearances, seemed, nevertheless') are Trubetskoi's, not Nikitin's. Nikitin was expressing his own, not received, opinions. Throughout the *Khozhenie* the phrase "God knows" expresses doubt: "God knows, what will happen" (23,44). In analogy of the tale of the three rings Nikitin acknowledges anyone who worships "one God" and possesses "purity" as a carrier of "true faith"

But there is no doubt that this would not be accepted either by Muslims (Islam honours the biblical prophets and Christ, but recognises Muhammed alone as the last prophet, and Islam as the final true faith) or Orthodox Christians. We do not possess any evidence about contacts between Afanasii Nikitin and the heretical movements which appeared in Russia in the fifteenth century, but he expresses ideas similar to those held by heretics of the late fifteenth century. We know that anti-heretical works of the period (later included in the *Prosvetitel'* of Iosif of Volokolamsk) refute the idea that God loves any man who "worships in any faith" so long as he fears God and is "righteous". Anti-heretical writings asserted that this could only have been true before the birth of Christ, but thereafter God could only love the Christians⁴¹ In Reformation Europe the idea of monotheism as the sole criterion of true faith was a tenet of Socinianism. A sixteenth century Russian adherent of Socinianism characteristically states: "all people are held the same by God Tatars, Germans and other heathens"⁴²

The ideas expressed by Afanasii Nikitin in *Khozhenie za tri moria* can be described as an original monotheistic syncretism. And there is no doubt that in his own country such a syncretism would be considered a dangerous error, and the same would be true of his political ideas. These too were expressed by Nikitin in several languages. Thus comparting Sebasteia (Greek colony in Asia Minor), Georgia, Turkey, Moldavia and Podolia (Ukrainian part of Poland-Lithuania), the author writes in Russian "And Russia" and then changes into Turkic mixed with Persian 'may God preserve it. God, have mercy upon it. There is no country like it in this world, through the princes of Russia are not like brothers to each other. Let Russia become prosperous, though justice does not reign there". He finally adds the name of God in four languages: Arabic, Persian, Russian and Turkic (cf. 25, 45)⁴³

Deliberations on the theme of princely disunity are also common in fifteenth century Russian writings. They are particularly clearly stated in the all-Russian chronicle compilation 1448, reflected in two chronicle groups: the Sofiiskii I and Novgorod IV. Sharply critical of the lack of "brotherly

feeling" among Russian princes, calling them to battle with the Horde, the compiler evidently aimed at achieving some sort of federation of princes to be headed by the grand prince of Moscow, but allowing for some degree of territorial autonomy, especially for Novgorod⁴⁴. The Utopianism of such a political conception was clear by the end of the fifteenth century. The grand princes of Moscow wanted centralised and absolute power, and had no intention of allowing local autonomy, but it is clear that such a conception appealed to Afanasii Nikitin.

The belief that all monotheistic faiths are equal, like the statement that there is "little justice" in Russia, would have put Nikitin in danger had he reached home, as he would have tried to disseminate his ideas there. But this did not happen. The merchant of Tver died without reaching his homeland, and his provocative ideas could no longer harm him.

FOOTNOTES

1. A. I. KLIBANOV. *U istokov russkoi gumanisticheskoi mysli. Istoricheskie traditsii idei ravenstva narodov i ver.* "Vestnik istorii mirovoi kul'tury", 2 (March-April 1958): 53-61 IDEM. *Svobodomyслиe v Tveri v XIV-XV vv.* "Voprosy istorii religii i ateizma", 6 (1958): 251-260; IDEM. *Reformatsionnye dvizheniia v Rossii v XIV-pervoi polovine XVI v.v.* Moskva 1960: 183-185, 371-379; Ia. S. Lur'e. *Afanasii Nikitin i russkaia obshchestvennaia mysl' XV v.*; B. D. GREKOV and V. P. ADRIANOVA-PERETS (eds.) *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasii Nikitina.* Moskva-Leningrad 1958: 136-138; IDEM. *Ideologicheskaia bor'ba v russkoi publitsistike.* Moskva-Leningrad 1960: 72-73.
2. M. N. TIKHOMIROV. *Srednevekovaiia Rossiia na mezhdunarodnykh putiakh (XIV-XV vv.).* Moskva 1966: 113.
3. I. I. SREZNEVSKI. *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasii Nikitina v 1466-1472 gg.* "Uchenye zapiski vtororogo otdeleniia AN", II, No. 2 (1856): 243; V. P. BOGDANOV. *Puteshestvie Afanasii Nikitina v Indiiu.* "Izvestiia vsesoiuznogo geograficheskogo obshchestva", 76, No. 6 (1944): 366; N. V. VODOVOZOV. *Zapiski Afanasii Nikitina ob Indii (stenogramma publichnoi iektsii).* Moskva 1955: 10-11; N. I. PROKOFIEV (ed.) *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasii Nikitina 1466-1472.* Moskva 1980: 8, 18-19.
4. I. I. SREZNEVSKI. *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasii Nikitina: 264-265.*
5. N. S. TRUBETSKOI. *"Khozhenie za tri moria" Afanasii Nikitina kak literaturnyi pamiatnik.* Published three times: 1) "Versty", I (1926); 2) "Michigan Slavic Studies", 3 (1963); 25-51; 3) *Semiotika* (ed. Iu. S. STEPANOV). Moskva 1983: 436-461 (hereafter *Semiotika*); L. MATEJKA and K. POMORSKA. *Readings in Russian Poetics: Formalist and Structuralist Views.* 1971: 199-219 (hereafter *Readings*) A. M. OSIPOV, V. A. ALEKSANDROV, N. M. GOL'DBERG. *Afanasii Nikitin i ego vremia.* Moskva 1956: 197-198; N. V. VODOVOZOV. *Zapiski Afanasii Nikitina ob Indii: 12.*

6. *Semiotika*: 438; *Readings*: 200
7. *Semiotika*: 439-446; *Readings*: 202-207
8. *Semiotika*: 446-449; *Readings*: 209-213
9. Unlike the "segments of calm exposition" the religious-lyrical digressions" were not included by Trubetskoi in a special *schema*; among the sections which have been left out of the analysis are the description of Hormuz, located between "segments" 1 and 2 on his *schema* and the travellers' prayer by the Ethiopian hills ("segment"9). The "developed religious-lyrical digression" between segments 2 and 3 (*Semiotika*: 456, fn.8-A) includes perfectly practical deliberations about the "goods" destined for "our" or "besermenskaia" land. The exclusion of the "dynamic" story of Nikitin's conversation with the *indeiane* in Bidar is not given justification; the discussion with the *besermenin* Malik between sections 5 and 6 is also excluded. The whole of the story between sections 6 and 7 is defined as a "religious-lyrical digression" (*Semiotika*: 457, fn. 8-G), yet the text includes a functional description of the political situation in India (*Semiotika*: 458, fn. 16), which has been left out of the general scheme of "segments of calm exposition". The text of "fragment" 7 and the "digression" which follows cannot be divided, since the "religious-lyrical digression" (*Semiotika*: 457, fn. 10-B) is organically linked with the preceding description of the might of the Indian sultan and the subsequent dynamic report of Nikitin's intention to return to Rus. In "segment" 9 Nikitin does not only speak of the return journey from Dabil, but also of the military clashes between Turkey and Iran.
10. *Semiotika*: 449; *Readings*: 212
11. G. LENHOFF. *Beyond Three Seas: Afanasij Nikitin's Journey from Orthodoxy to Apostasy*. "East European Quarterly" XIII (1979), No. 4: 434-435, cf. 431, 445; another study by G. LENHOFF, *Trubetskoy's "Afanasi Nikitin" reconsidered*. "Canadian-American Slavic Studies, 18 (1984), No. 4: 377-392, came to our attention soon after this article was submitted. We are delighted to note that Lenhoff's critique of Trubetskoi's thesis coincides in many aspects with ours.
12. G. LENHOFF. *Beyond Three Seas*: 442, 444
13. B. D. GREKOV, V. P. ADRIANOVA-PERETS (eds) *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasia Nikitina 1466-1472* (2nd ed.). Moskva-Leningrad 1958: 18-19, 44. Further page references from this edition accompany quotations in square brackets. A new edition of Nikitin's work has recently appeared in the series *Literaturnye pamiatniki*: Ia. S. LUR'E and L.S. SEMENOV (eds.), *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasii Nikitina*. Leningrad 1986.
14. cf. the Laurentian chronicle account of the execution of the monk Zosima, condemned for conversion to Islam. PSRL, I, No.2., Leningrad 1927: col. 476.
15. G. LENHOFF. *Beyond Three Seas* 432, 437
16. G. LENHOFF. *Beyond Three Seas* : 440-441
17. G. LENHOFF. *Beyond Three Seas* 432

18. B. D. GREKOV, V.P. ADRIANOVA-PERETS (eds) *Khozhdienie za tri moria Afanasia Nikitina 1466-1472* Moskva-Leningrad 1958 (hereafter *Khozhdienie*): 162-163. The classification of the versions in this article is based on material prepared for Ia. S. LUR'E and L.S. SEMENOV (eds.) *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasia Nikitina*. Leningrad 1986.
19. *Khozhdienie* 178-181. This refers to the Sukhanovskii version as a "seventeenth century redaction"; cf. G.P. UKHANOV *Sintaksis "Khozheniia za tri moria" (avtoreferat dissertatsii)*. 1952: 7; A. I. KLIBANOV. *Reformatsionnye dvizheniia v Rossii v XIV-pervoi polovine XVI v.v.* Moskva 1960: 373-378.
20. *Khozhdienie* 166-1-7; G. P. UKHANOV. *Sintaksis* 7.
21. *Khozhdienie* 171-176. A.N. NASONOV. *Letopisnye pamiatniki Tverskogo kniazhestva*. "Izvestiia AN SSSR. Otd. gumanitarnykh nauk (1930), No. 9: 715-721; Ia. S. LUR'E. *Podvig Afanasia Nikitina (k 500-letiiu ego puteshestviia)*. "Izvestiia vsesoiuznogo geograficheskogo obshchestva", 99 (1967), No. 5: 436-437; IDEM. *Obshcherusskie letopisi XIV-XV vv.* Leningrad 1976: 224-225, 227-228; V.A. KUCKKIN. *Sud'ba "Khozheniia za tri moria" Afanasia Nikitina v drevnerusskoi pis'mennosti*. "Voprosy istorii" (1969), No. 5: 76-77.
22. Ia. S. LUR'E *Obshcherusskie letopisi*: 172-174, 198-209; V. A. KUCHKIN. *Sud'ba* 71-75.
23. S. B. VESELOVSKII. *D'iaki i pod'iachie XV-XVII v.v.* Moskva 1975: 316 V. A. KUCHKIN. *Sud'ba* 69-71
24. *Khozhdienie* 165-166. R. TEREKULOVA *Khozhenie Afanasia Nikitina kak pamiatnik russkogo literaturnogo iazyka XV v.* "Uchenye zapiski Tambovskogo gos. pedinstituta", I (1941): 142; G.P. UKHANOV. *Sintaksis*: 6-8.
25. Noting that the *Khozhenie* describes, among others, Moldavia and Podolie before mentioning Russia, V. A. KUCHKIN (*Sud'ba* 67-69) expressed the opinion that Nikitin's return journey went through these countries, from the Crimea to Smolensk. That is why he agrees with those who consider that the *Khozhenie* was written after Nikitin completed his journey. But Nikitin may have visited these countries during earlier travels. Moreover, he also speaks of Georgia, which he was unlikely to have passed through on his way to Russia, since he went from Trebizond to the Crimea.
26. V. P. ADRIANOVA-PERETS. *Afanasi Nikitin - puteshestvennik - pisatel*. In *Khozhdienie*: 93-96.
27. M. F. VLADIMIRSKII-BUDANOV. *Obzor istorii russkogo prava*. Petrograd-Kiev 1915: 399-400, 600.
28. The dating of Nikitin's journey relies on indirect evidence. Most authors have accepted SREZNEVSKII's dating (1466-1472), deduced from Nikitin's rather obscure reference to celebrating Easter in Hormuz (I. I. SREZNEVSKII *Khozhenie za tri moria Afanasia Nikitina*: (260-264), even though after his third Easter away Nikitin could only guess at the date of Easter by (erroneous) reference to Muslim feasts. A comparison of Nikitin's evidence with Hindu-Persian sources prompted L. S. SEMENOV. (*K datirovke puteshestviia*

Afanasiia Nikitina. "Vspomogatel nye istoricheskie distsipliny" 1978: 134-148) to date the journey 1471-1474. If his dating is correct, Nikitin commenced his return journey from India in May 1473.

29. Ia. S. LUR'E *Literaturnaia i kul'turno-prosvetitel'naia deiatel'nost' Efrosina v kontse XV v* "Trudy otdela drevnerusskoi literatury" XVII (1971): 155.

30. V. P. ADRIANOVA-PERETS. Afanasi Nikitin *puteshestvennik-pisatel'* 100-101.

31. A. I. KLIBANOV. *Reformatsionnye dvizhenia*: 185; IDEM. *Svobodomyслиe v Tveri*: 256.

32. G. LENHOFF *Beyond Three Seas*: 441.

33. *Semiotika*: 458, fn. 14.

34. A. I. KLIBANOV. *Reformatsionnye dvizhenia*: 185.

35. *The Holy Quran* Sura II, verse 87; Sura IV, verse 171; Sura V, verse 113. The references to the Koran have been kindly supplied by A. D. ZHELTIAKOV, who is also responsible for new translations of the Turkic-Persian texts cited here and used in the new edition of the *Khozhenie*. Cf. G. LENHOFF. *Beyond Three Seas*: 442. (Translator's note: the Sura references are from the Beirut 1968 edition of the Koran).

36. G. LENHOFF considers that these words refer to Hindus (*Beyond Three Seas*: 437), while I. N. PROKOFIEV in his edition of the *Khozhenie* (*Khozhenie* 25) says they describe the "ruling class of India" But these words accompany a description of the bazaar at Bidar, where more than one ethnic group of India must have been represented.

37. See fn. 28.

38. G. BOCCACCIO. *Decameron*. Day 1, Novella 3. S. THOMPSON. *Motif-Index of Folk Literature*. Copenhagen 1957, vol. 4: J 462.3.1. D. P. ROTUNDA. *Motif-Index of the Italian Novella in Prose*. Bloomington 1941: J 462.3.1, J 462.3.2.2, J 462.3.1.2; M. J. BIN MORION. *Der Born Judas*. Leipzig 1918: 253. A. I. KLIBANOV (*U istokov*: 45-46) was the first to make a comparison between the ideas of the equality of peoples and faiths in fifteenth-sixteenth century Russia and Italian humanist literature, beginning with the late thirteenth century.

39. B. A. USPENSKII (*K probleme khristiansko-iazycheskogo sinkretizma v istorii russkoi kul'tury*. 2. *Dualisticheskii kharakter russkoi srednevekovoi kul'tury* (na materiale "Khozhenia za tri moria Afanasiia Nikitina). "Vtorichnye modeliruiushchie sistemy", Tartu 1979: 60-62) has interpreted this phrase to mean that Nikitin considered India an "impure place", a territory unconnected with the power of the Lord, where it was possible to behave only "unrighteously". Uspenskii sees the *Khozhenie* as a deliberate antithesis of accounts of pilgrimages to the Holy Land, a sort of anti-pilgrimage, and considers the Turkic-Persian text as "evidently non-Orthodox". Yet he correctly notes that in Russia "impure places" were certain "microspaces" in which it was not proper to utter the name of the Lord: "the bathhouse,

sty, swamps, forests, roads, crossroads etc.". It seems to us that when Nikitin speaks of the need to utter the name of the Lord in "all pure places" he excludes precisely such places, not the whole of India. Otherwise the whole text of the *Khozhenie* would have to be seen as non-Orthodox (including without doubt, the praise of Russia). In such a case Nikitin would be in the position of the subject of the Greek sophism: "The Cretan maintains that all Cretans lie"

40. Cf. above, fn. 10.

41. N. A. KAZAKOVA, Ia S. LUR'E *Antifeodal'nye ereticheskie dvizhenia na Rusi XIV-nachala XVI v.* :125, 368.

42. A. POPOV (ed.) *Poslanie mnogoslovnoe. Sochinenie inoka Zinovii*. Moskva 1880: 143.

43. We cite from a corrected translation made by A. D. ZHELTIAKOV. See above, fn. 35.

44. Ia S. LUR'E. *O politicheskikh ideiiakh obshcherusskogo svoda 1448*. In *Festschrift für Fairy von Lilienfeld zum 65 Geburtstag*. Erlangen 1982: 135-152.